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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, who has made and preserved us as a nation, make our lawmakers people of high vision and steadfast fidelity to Your wisdom. Use them to lift the banner of righteousness which exalts a nation. As they work together, deepen their understanding of one another's perspectives so that they will treat their colleagues as they would want their colleagues to treat them. Purge them from all that blemishes, corrupts, and defiles our common life. Heal our land, Lord, and use our Senators as agents of Your healing.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 29, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a

Senator from the State of New Hampshire, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. SHAHEEN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following any leader remarks, there will be a period of morning business for an hour, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half.

Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 493, the small business jobs bill. The Senate will recess from 12:30 until 2:15 to allow for weekly caucus meetings. Rollcall votes in relation to amendments to the small business jobs bill are possible today. Senators will be notified when votes are scheduled.

We have 10 amendments now pending. I spoke yesterday afternoon to the Republican leader, and I think we are in good shape now to hopefully resolve the 1099 matter this afternoon. We are looking forward to having a consent agreement we can vote on. I think we are at a point where, in the morning, we can vote on the McConnell amendment dealing with EPA and a couple other amendments relating to EPA to get rid of that issue one way or the other.

There are other matters with the bill we would like to set up votes on, and if people are willing to allow us to do that, we could do some of those this afternoon. But we are making progress on this very important bill. With all

the amendments being offered, we sometimes lose sight of the fact that this bill, which has been led by Senators LANDRIEU and SNOWE, is an extremely important bill for creating jobs with small businesses. It is an innovation bill, and the programs this bill covers have done some tremendously important things for the country.

With the CR, I spoke with the White House this morning, and there are conversations going on with the White House and the Republican leadership in the House, and I think this matter, with a little bit of good fortune, could move down the road in the next day or two to get us to a point where we could have something done so there doesn't have to be a government shutdown. I certainly hope that is the case.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

ENERGY TAX

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, as lawmakers return to Washington this week, we did so against the backdrop of many world crises. From recovery efforts in Japan, to battles everywhere from Afghanistan to Libya, to an unfolding economic crisis in Europe, the scope and intensity of world events in recent months has been nothing short of breathtaking.

Yet in the middle of all this, it is important we not lose sight of the struggles and concerns of so many around us here at home. At a time when roughly 1 in 4 American homeowners owes more money on their mortgage than their home is worth, at a time when nearly 1 in 10 working Americans is looking for a job, at a time when the Federal debt has reached heights none of us could have even imagined just a few years

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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